An Open Letter to the North Carolina General Assembly

Honorable General Assembly Members,

As members of the Consumer and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC) for Alliance Health LME/MCO, we are dismayed by the continuing cuts to single stream funding for mental illness, substance use disorder, and intellectual/developmental disability.

Alliance CFAC is comprised of individuals and family members who receive mental health, intellectual/developmental disability, and substance use/addiction services. CFAC is a self-governing, state mandated committee that serves as an advisor to the Alliance administration and board of directors, with a statutory requirement to participate in the Alliance budget process. The single-stream cuts in the pending state budget would mark the sixth consecutive year of reductions to the non-Medicaid state appropriation for services for uninsured/underinsured citizens with mental health, IDD, and SUD needs – some of the most vulnerable residents of our state. These cuts to this critical state behavioral health funding have diverted more than half a billion dollars from the state’s public behavioral health system, including what would be nearly $80 million from Alliance.

I urge you and your colleagues in the General Assembly to stop cutting single stream funding. These state funds are critical for providing services for uninsured/underinsured citizens with mental health, intellectual/developmental disabilities, and substance use disorder needs, and these budget cuts are directly at the expense of North Carolina’s most vulnerable populations.

Please hear and take to heart the following comments shared by our members:

“Budget cuts will affect me tremendously with OJ. It is hard enough to take care of an adult child. It will be even harder with the budget cuts.”

Carrie Morrisey, CFAC member

“With the cuts who will be responsible for the so-called future criminal activities and the criminal justice system who is not going to know what to do with the mental health consumers except lock them up.”

Dr. M. Michael Bryant McGuire, voter, retired LTC, disabled veteran, person living with a disability, advocate with a loud voice, and a CFAC member

“If funding cuts continue, the services for below poverty level residents will continue to be an issue.”

Ellen Gibson, CFAC Co-Chair
“I have a daughter who lives with schizophrenia who was diagnosed in her twenties and is now fifty years old. She lives by herself and is doing well at the present time. The reason that she is doing so well is because of the mental health program in place which could be in jeopardy when funding is cut or done away with.”

*Dorothy Johnson, CFAC member*

“State budget cuts have already been felt by the community. Further cuts will ripple through the community restricting access to care”
“Cuts have direct impact on families and stakeholders”
“Have caused children and families to go without crucial services needed to maintain health”
“Direct impact on homelessness within the catchment area”

*Johnston County members*

“I am living with bi-polar and I am an advocate for myself, my family and my community. I want more funding for people with no insurance and for the people that need help paying for services that their insurance does not pay for.”

*Tammy Harrington, CFAC member*

“Without this funding it causes a rippling effect which involves homelessness, unemployment, lack of retention, high emergency cost to the county in which you live.”

*Charlitta Burriss, CFAC member*

“Concerning health insurance, I feel it is unfair if the person or family can’t afford it, to take from and limit the needs of those that desperately need the help.”

*Pinkey Dunston, CFAC member*

“It grieves me as a mother to think of the world that my son will have to try to live a successful life as proposed changes take place. “

*Regina Mays, CFAC member*

“My biggest fear with the cuts is that I will be readmitted to the hospital and not be able to see my family”.

*Faye Griffin, CFAC member*

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We have two clear and emphatic requests for you:
- Stop the single stream funding cuts to the LME/MCOs
- Sufficiently fund and strengthen our public behavioral healthcare system
Sincerely,

David Curro
Chair, Alliance Health CFAC

Members, Alliance Health CFAC:

Vicky Bass
Dorothy Best
Jackie Blue
Jamille Blue
Charlitta Burruss
Helen Castillo
Andrea Clementi
Christopher Dale
LaDeana Dexter
Bobby Dixon
Albert Dixon, Jr.
Jerry Dodson
Marie Dodson
Pinkey Dunston
Shirley Francis
Bradley Gavriluk
Leanna George

Ellen Gibson
Tracey Glenn-Thomas
Wanda (Faye) Griffin
Briana Harris
Sharon Harris
James Henry
Steve Hill
Carole Johnson
Connie King Jerome
Dorothy M. Johnson
Latasha Jordan
Joe Kilsheimer
Jessica Larrison
Renee Lloyd
Tekeyyon Lloyd
Carson Lloyd, Jr.
Megan Mason

Regina Mays
Dr. Michael Bryant McGuire
Karen McKinnon
Felishia McPherson
Trula Jean Miles
Israel Pattison
Jason Phipps
Carrie Morrissey
Anthony Sarasona
Gregory Edward Schweizer
James (Dan) Shaw
Tammy Harrington Shaw
Annette Smith
Ben Smith
Brenda Solomon
Cassandra Williams-Herbert